CHURCH HISTORY

Chapter 10 - The Church and Papal Development (AD 461-1073)

1. *A Review of the Church's Organization*
    a. *It was natural for one of the elders (overseer, presbyter, episcopos) to take the lead and receive the title of bishop*
    b. *The episcopal form of church organization was further developed in the Church's struggle with Gnosticism and Montanism. A centralized structure of church organization was formed to determine what the Bible said and to state the orthodox position, since even heretics appealed to Scripture*
    c. *Prestige of metropolitan churches over countryside churches gave rise to bishops (Archbishops) to seem to have more power than other bishops, and even looked up by the ones from the countryside*
    d. *The belief grew that the church in Rome had been founded by the apostle Peter; the papal throne is often referred to by the Roman Catholic Church as "the chair of St. Peter."*
2. *Events in History Strengthen the Papacy*
    a. *Circumstances in a remarkable way favored the growth of papal power, namely:*
    b. *the barbarians who invaded Italy had come under the spell of Rome; they had accepted Christianity and stood in awe of the bishops of Rome*
    c. *There was no longer an emperor in Rome to over-shadow its bishop*
    d. *Through the work of missionaries sent out from Rome, churches were founded among many tribes in the north of Europe*
    e. *The Muslim conquest of Syria, Palestine, and Egypt removed forever the patriarchs of Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria as rivals to the bishop of Rome*
    f. *The Church had suffered some grave disasters, but those very disasters brought increasing power and authority to the head of the church in Rome*
3. *Papal Power Aided by Deceit*
    a. *The papacy was also aided by the scheming efforts of men who, through deceit and fraud, succeeded in strengthening the pope's position and authority through propaganda and bogus documents namely:*
    b. ***Donation of Constantine*** *– accordingly Constantine ordered all officeholders in the Church to be subject to Pope Sylvester I and to his successors upon the papal throne; transferred to the popes the city of Rome and all the provinces, districts, and cities of Italy and of the western regions; also bestowed upon the popes sovereignty over the western half of the Empire*
    c. ***Isidorian Decretals*** *– (or decisions) claimed to have been collected by Isidore of Seville; a document consisted of decisions of popes and councils from Clement of Rome in the 1st century to Gregory II in the 8th; accordingly, bishops can appeal directly to the pope, and neither bishops nor popes were subject to the control of secular governments; "Donation…" was included here; the hierarchical system allegedly was the result of a growth extending over several centuries; it was presented as something complete and unchangeable from the beginning as the great purpose of this document was to show that all the rights claimed by the popes in the ninth century had been exercised by the popes from the earliest times*
    d. *Nicholas de Cusa first suggested in 1433 that the decretals is a forgery, later it was called "Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals"; Lorenzo Valla proved that the "Donation" was a forgery in 1440; today Catholic and Protestant scholars agree that both documents are spurious*
    e. *These colossal frauds were foisted upon the world in an age of extreme ignorance, and throughout the medieval centuries they were generally accepted as genuine that gave the papacy sufficient time to establish and entrench itself by the time that they were discovered; it also caused the rift between the east and west churches that in 1054 these parts of the Church formally separated - the bishop of Rome, now known as the pope, was supreme in the West while the patriarch of Constantinople was supreme in the East*
4. *Pope Nicholas I*
    a. *Occupied the papal throne from 858 to 867, did much to lay the foundation of papal power and prestige in following centuries; he believed that the bishops are the agents of the pope, that the pope is the ruler of the entire Church, and that the Church is superior to all earthly powers*